

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 (ISO) W

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O 051814Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7304

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OSLO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

USMISSION OECD PARIS UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 5557

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, EEC

SUBJECT: EC-ARAB RELATIONS AND ENERGY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

REF: BRUSSELS 1341

1. FROM REFTEL WE INFER THAT DEPARTMENT IS CONSIDERING CANCELLATION OF NEXT MEETING OF ENERGY COORDINATING GROUP IN REACTION TO DECISION OF EC-9 TO PURSUE THREE-STAGE PROGRAM WITH ARAB STATES. WITHOUT BENEFIT OF ALL THE FACTORS AND CONSIDERATIONS AVAILABLE TO WASHINGTON, IT APPEARS TO US THAT SUCH A MOVE WOULD PLAY DIRECTLY INTO FRENCH HANDS.

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2. AS YOU KNOW, FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT AND OTHER FRENCH OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN CLAIMING THAT FRANCE ALONE DEFENDED EUROPEAN INTERESTS IN WASHINGTON. THEY PREDICT TIME WILL PROVE THEM RIGHT ON TWO FUNDAMENTAL

COUNTS: A) THAT U.S. ENERGY INITIATIVE WAS LARGELY DESIGNED TO REASSERT U.S. CONTROL OVER A EUROPEAN COMMUNITY TAKING FIRST TENTATIVE STEPS TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE, I.E. A COMMON POLITICAL POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE ARAB STATES, AND B) THAT THE CONFERENCE WAS SO HASTILY PREPARED AND HELD AT SUCH AN INAUSPICIOUS MOMENT THAT NO CONCRETE RESULTS HELPFUL TO EUROPE IN MEETING ENERGY PROBLEMS CAN BE EXPECTED TO FLOW FROM IT.

3. WE HAVE EVERY INDICATION THAT GOF BELIEVES IT CAN STILL SALVAGE ADVANTAGES TO FRENCH OVERALL FOREIGN POLICY GOALS DESPITE EC DISUNITY AND "ISOLATION" OF FRANCE IN WASHINGTON. FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT'S EFFORTS IN BONN AND HIS SUCCESS IN PUTTING AN EC-9 MEETING WITH THE ARAB NATIONS BACK ON THE RAILS IS CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT GOF HAS NOT IN ANY WAY RENOUNCED ITS ANALYSIS OF FRENCH INTERESTS IN EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST. THEREFORE, APPEARANCE AT THIS TIME OF U.S. BACKING AWAY FROM COMMITMENT TO COORDINATED APPROACH TO ENERGY CRISIS WOULD IN OUR VIEW ASSIST FRENCH EFFORTS TO IMPOSE THEIR POLICIES AND STRATEGIES ON THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.

4. THE OTHER EIGHT MADE AN HISTORIC DECISION IN WASHINGTON IN CLEARLY CHOOSING AN ATLANTIC APPROACH RATHER THAN A NARROWLY DEFINED EUROPEAN APPROACH TO AN ISSUE OF IMPORTANCE TO BOTH EUROPE AND THE U.S. THEY DID THIS AT CONSIDERABLE COST TO ONE OF THEIR TWIN GOALS OF DEVELOPING BOTH EUROPEAN UNITY AND ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP, BECAUSE EUROPEAN UNITY WITHOUT FRANCE IS MEANINGLESS. IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE, HOWEVER, THE EIGHT UNDOUBTEDLY FELT SOME NEED TO REINTEGRATE FRANCE INTO THE COMMUNITY AND PROBABLY SAW ADOPTION OF FRENCH PROPOSALS FOR COMMUNITY APPROACH TO THE
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ARAB STATES AS AN ESSENTIAL STEP IN THAT DIRECTION.

5. FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT WE WOULD ENDORSE THRUST AMBASSADOR STRAUZ-HUPE'S AND AMBASSADOR GREENWALD'S PROPOSALS, REFTTEL, ESPECIALLY PARA 3.B. AND C.
STONE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 27 JUL 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, ENERGY, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PARIS05557
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: P740141-1684
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740382/abbrzbga.tel
Line Count: 104
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: n/a
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS NOFORN
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS NOFORN
Reference: BRUSSELS 1341
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19-Jul-2001 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <04 JUN 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EC-ARAB RELATIONS AND ENERGY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, FR, US, XF, EEC
To: STATE INFO BRUSSELS
LONDON
ROME
COPENHAGEN
DUBLIN
BONN
THE HAGUE

LUXEMBOURG
TOKYO
OSLO
OTTAWA
OECD PARIS UNN

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005